

# SB 1381 (EVANS)

## LABELING: GE INGREDIENTS IN FOODS

### THE GOAL

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SB 1381 seeks to require the labeling of all GE (genetically engineered) foods offered for retail sale in California.

### BACKGROUND

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**No federal or state requirement currently exists requiring labeling of genetically modified foods**, even with 64 countries, including leading California trade partners like Japan, China, and European Union member states, requiring GE food labeling. The US Food & Drug Administration does not require safety studies of GM foods before they are put on the shelves for consumers.

**GM organisms linked to health problems.** Animal studies have suggested links to allergies, cancers, immune system disorders, organ damage, accelerated aging, digestive issues and infertility, among others.

**Infants and young children are more sensitive to chemicals and toxins.** Their immune systems and blood/brain barriers are not fully developed; they eat more and metabolize their food at higher rates.

**Infants are three to four times more prone to food allergens**, even tiny amounts.

**It is estimated that up to 85 percent of processed foods in regular grocery stores** in the US contains at least one GM ingredient.

### THIS BILL

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SB 1381 (Evans) requires foods containing GE ingredients to list those ingredients on the label.

- Provides that all packaged food that is entirely or partially produced with GM be identified and labeled or is otherwise considered "misbranded."
- In the case of GE raw food commodities that are not separately packaged, requires the retailer to place conspicuous labeling on the retail store shelf or bin in which the food is displayed for sale.

- Authorizes the Attorney General to bring action citing an alleged violator of this bill. Allows citizen lawsuits to enforce the act, but only after a 60-day notice has been given and does not allow the citizen to collect damages.
- Specifies that unless a retailer is also the producer or manufacturer of the GM food, no act or omission by any retailer is in violation of the law except in the case of failure to provide point of purchase labeling for unpackaged raw GM agricultural commodities.

### RELATED LEGISLATION

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AB 88 (Huffman, 2012) would have required GE salmon or other finfish products prepared from those fish or the progeny of GE fish be conspicuously disclosed on the label.

SB 1121 (Migden, 2008), SB 63 (Migden, 2007) and AB 1100 (Ruskin, 2007) would have required cloned animals and their progeny to be labeled.

AB 791 (Strom-Martin, 2002) would have required transgenic fish to be labeled.

### SUPPORT

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Biosafety Alliance, CalPIRG, Californians for Pesticide Reform, California State Grange, Center for Food Safety, Consumers Union, Environmental Working Group, Food & Agriculture Caucus of the Democratic Party, Food Democracy Now!, Food & Water Watch, Friends of the Earth, Good Earth Natural Foods, LabelGMOs.org, Moms Advocating Sustainability, Organic Consumers Association, Pesticide Action Network, Pesticide Watch

### OPPOSITION

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None received.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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